13.09 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET, 1991-92—GENERAL DISCUSSION AND DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 1991-92—*Contd.*

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: The House now shall take up further discussion on the Railway Budget and Demands for Grants for Railways for 1991-92.

Is the Minister of State here? Not present. Shri D. Venkateswara Rao—not present; Shri Shibu Soren—not present; Shri Suraj Mandal—not present; Shri Pius Tirkey—not present; Shri Kalka Das—not present; Shri Anantrao Deshmukh—not present.

SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR SINGH THAKUR (Khandwa): Sir, while welcoming the hon. Railway Minister and expressing my support for the Railway Budget, I would like to say that the railway line in Khandwa runs through the centre of the city. The existing overbridges are very old and narrow. As a result, there are frequent traffic jams. During the tenure of Shri Madhavrao Scindia, a survey was conducted to construct an over-bridge 2A but the work has not started so far. What is the reason for this?

13.10 hrs. [RAO RAM SINGH *in the Chair*]

An overbridge should also be constructed near village Nimbona on Indore-Amravati section because a number of trains pass through that section and traffic is held up for hours together. I request that immediate action be taken for construction of another over-bridge 2-A with two lanes.

Burhanpur is a pilgrimage centre for the Bohras which attracts pilgrims and tourists not only from India but also from abroad. Burhanpur also has a gurudwara and by many pilgrims pay visit there everyday. It is a tourist spot and is also important from the historical, social, educational and religious point of view. Burhanpur is a textiles trade centre also where one lakh cotton bales are made every year. A large number of farmers and traders frequent the place. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a halt for the following trains:—

(1) 2627, 2628 Karnataka Express—Bangalore-New Delhi.

(2) 2133, 2134 Pushpak Express—Lucknow-Bombay.

3) 2701, 2702 Goa Express—Nizamuddin-Miraj.

(4) 4247, 4248 Shramshakti Express—Muzaffarpur-Bombay.

(5) 2161, 2162 Laskar Express (Central Railway).

Burhanpur railway station is situated at a distance of 5 kilometres from the city. There is no enquiry office at Burhanpur railway station and passengers face many difficulties as they do not get information about the incoming and outgoing trains. A telephone attached to the parcel office is used for answering enquiries also. As the line is engaged for parcel office work, the public has difficulty in contacting the station. Therefore, an enquiry office should be provided there which should remain open for 24 hours. A telephone booth and a retiring room should also be provided at the station.

Trains going towards Bombay and Delhi pass through Burhanpur at night. The berth quota in train nos. 1037, 1038, 4678, 4677 and 3004 should be increased to 4 berths in three tier and 2 berths in first class and A.C. For nearly one year the halting time of 1058 up Amritsar-Dadar Express and 1057 Down Dadar-Amritsar Express has been cut down. These trains halt for just three minutess which is not enough for the several travellers to board or get down from the trains. So the halting time should be restored to five minutes.

People reside on the Eastern and Western side of the railway station. In the absence of an overbridge connecting both the sides, people face a lot of difficulty in crossing the station. There is an overbridge connecting the two platforms but local people using it to cross-over are treated as ticketless passengers and charged accordingly. If an overbridge is provided people from both sides may reach their respective colonies directly through the bridge without coming to the plateform. School going children will also be benefited with the construction of this overbridge. During emergency, it is difficult for the vehicles to move from East to West of the railway station. So a railway crossing may be provided either to the North or to the South of the Station to enable vehicles to cross over when the track is clear.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards reduction of reservation quota in the trains with effect from 1-7-1991. In 1037 Dn. Punjab Mail, instead of 2 AC Second class reservations quota only one first class reservation quota has been provided. In 1093 Dn. Mahanagri train only 1 AC Second reservation quota is provided instead of 2 AC Second reservations quota and in 2133 Dn. the quota of 2 first class reservations has been altogether abolished. All the reservations quota may please be restored.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Oscar Fernandes. I request the Hon'ble Member to speak in English. As we did not inform the office in advance. You may please speak in English. Even though Kannada is a very very sweet language I request you to speak in English.

[*Translation*]

***SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES** (Udipi): He has come Sir. He is already there. The interpreter is already in the box. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Railways have to play a vital role in the progress of the country. In my opinion it is not enough to keep in mind only the economic situation and the development of railways in the country. We have to keep before us what all we want to achieve in the development of railways for one century. Yesterday, my friend Mr. Mukul Vasnik was mentioning that the State from which Hon'ble Railway Minister hails would get priority for development. This may not be the case.

There is a feeling among the people that there would be substantial development of railways in a particular state if the Railway Minister hails from that State. This is not so at least in the case of Karnataka State. Perhaps Karnataka has the pride of sending more number of railway Ministers than any other state in the country.

We should have a long plan of railways for about 100 years. It would enable the progress of the entire country as a whole. In that case we will be knowing in which States new railway lines would be laid. We will also know the conversion, electrification etc. in each and every State in advance. This is not just a plan for imagination but it is a plan of reality. In this direction my suggestion would be to earmark land in advance for laying the new lines and to grow trees on both the sides of proposed railway line. If this is done then the public cannot construct any building and the question of evacuation also does not arise. The public will be happy to know that industrial development, construction of roads and bridges would take place. Such earmarked land should not be given to the public. If it is given then the Govt. has

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*Translation of the Speech Originally delivered in Kannada.

[Sh. Oscar Fernandes]

to spend huge money to get the land back. There are cases where the Ministry has spent crores of rupees to get the land back.

Development of railways is the joint responsibility of both Centre and States. There would be floods at some places and drought situation may prevail in many other parts of the country. There may be other problems also. The country spends several crores of rupees every year for relief work. If a portion of this amount is earmarked for the development of railway it would be more useful.

The Hon'ble Minister has increased the freight rates on many items but he has spared most of the essential commodities. I congratulate the Hon'ble Minister for this. Here I request the Hon'ble Minister not to increase the rates on milk. Our late lamented leader Shri Rajiv Gandhi is not amidst us today. He had made it clear in our party manifesto that the life of the common man must be made happier if our party comes to power. Hence I hope the Hon'ble Minister would do the needful in this regard.

It has been mentioned in the budget about privatisation. If the Govt. is saving lot of money and the people are benefitted then it is alright. Otherwise, I am opposed to the idea of privatisation, especially privatisation of conservancy services. The people under this category are all from backward classes and weaker sections of the society. Privatisation would affect them adversely. Neither they get permanent assignment nor better payment. Therefore, it is better if the railways keep these services in its own hand.

As I stated earlier many persons became Railway Ministers from my state. But I regret to state that development of railways has not taken place in the same proportion in Karnataka. The people of my State are very much disappointed.

On behalf of the people of Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Maharashtra and the whole country I congratulate the Hon'ble Minister for sanctioning Rs. 51 crores as equity capital. According to me sanctioning finance is not that important. Completion of the project is much more important. I appeal to the Hon'ble Minister to complete the Konkan Railway project much earlier than the promised time i.e. towards the end of the year 1994. The people in general have some doubts in their minds about the completion of this project. Now a substantial amount has been sanctioned. Next year also some allocation may be made. But people think that this process may not expedite the completion of the project. Hence it has become imminent to release the railway bonds for about 300 crores of rupees at the earliest. Then only we can create confidence in the minds of the people.

To make this project profitable we have to consider the transportation of goods also in addition to traffic facilities.

The development of railway line between Hospet and Ankola *via* Hubli should be treated as an integral part of the Konkan Railway project. Now iron ore is being sent to Madras port and from there it is sent to foreign countries. This ore can be exported through Karwar port or Mangalore port. It saves huge amount of money and time. Hence this vital line between Hospet and Ankola should be developed completely and immediately. The Hon'ble Minister has given an assurance in this august House that conversion of Mysore—Bangalore metre gauge line would be completed by the end of the year 1992. I thank him for this assurance and I hope it would be completed well in time.

Conversion of Miraj-Bangalore metre gauge line is an important long pending demand of the people of Karnataka. I request the Hon'ble

Minister to include this work in the present Budget itself. In case if he finds it difficult to include in the present budget I want him to give us an assurance to include it in the next year's budget at least.

Mangalore is a prominent port of the country. Konkan Railway project has come to this port as a boon. There is metre gauge line between Bangalore and Mangalore. This has to be converted into broad gauge at the earliest. At present there is night train service between Mangalore and Bangalore. I request the Hon'ble Minister to introduce day service also. An assurance had been given previously by the then Hon'ble Railway Minister. I hope this would be done very soon.

Due to scarcity of time I do not want to go into more details. I only reiterate that the Konkan railway project should be completed in time. Mangalore—Udipi railway line should also be completed at the earliest.

I extend my gratitude to the Hon'ble Railway Minister and the Hon'ble Prime Minister for presenting a very good railway budget for the year 1991-92.

Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak on this important subject and with these words I conclude my speech.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are several hon. Members who would like to speak on the Railway Budget. Now, the time is very restricted. Therefore, I would like to appeal to all hon. Members not to take more than five or six minutes, so that maximum number of hon. Members can be accommodated.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN (Kishanganj): Mr. Chairman Sir, I must confess, at the very outset, that I am one of the persons who believes that the Ministry of Railways has no right to exist. ...(*Interruptions*). It is nothing more than a public sector undertaking. It is the biggest in the country no doubt with the largest number of employees. But, I do not see the reason, the rationale, for its having been a Ministry. What policy decision does it take? There has to be a Railway Authority or a Railway Corporation which should deal with the railway transport problem in the public interest and as a commercial undertaking as it was.

While it is a Ministry today and it was a commercial organisation in the days of yore the Railway employees continue to enjoy perquisites which are far above and beyond those enjoyed by the ordinary mortals who are employees of the other public sector undertakings. Perhaps this is a remnant of the past. It is a throw back to the times when the Railway was a commercial organisation and every employee was given cetain facilities and privileges. The time has come when this matter should be reviewed because this is eating into the facilities offered by the Railways to the larger public of the country. I often find in the First Class and in the A.C. II that the proportion of the Railway employees of a very low category who are occupying the very scarce accommodation is increasingly high. So, that is one suggestion that I would like to place before the hon. Minister that the perks enjoyed by the Railway employees, if he has the political courage to do so, must be brought down to be on par with those of the other public sector employees—nothing more and nothing less.

The second aspect is this—and, of course, here the hon. Minister is not likely to agree with me—that the Railways function almost like a State within a State. It does not only run

[Sh. Syed Shahabuddin]

the Railways, it also runs schools, it runs hospitals and it runs canteens and kitchens, it cultivates lands, it engages in forest and I do not know what else it does. I think this all eats into the efficiency of the Railway organisation. I think we have a Government where there has to be a rational distribution of functions, and in a rational distribution of function, the schools must be run by the Central Schools Organisation. The hospitals, if they are to come under the Central Government even if facilities are to be provided to the Railway employees, must function under the Director General of Health Services and so on. Therefore, the second suggestion I would like to place before the hon. Minister is to cut down on the ancillary and auxillary activities of the Railway Ministry and, as far as possible, restrict the Railways Department or the Railway Ministry to running the railways which, of course, they are not doing very well. I think almost nearly all the time the trains are unpunctual and I think one of the reasons for this is that the attention of the Ministry is diverted to a very large sector. Therefore, it has to be refocussed back to its primary duty of running the Railways of the country with punctuality and with efficiency.

The third point I would like to make is this that every year they come up with some *ad hoc* increase in railway fare and freight. We are not told on what basis that particular increase has been arrived at. We understand the politics involved. If it is a weak government, then they do not go beyond a certain point; if they are a strong government, they can play more freely and more strongly with passengers and users. But we would like to have some scientific basis for the determination of the fares and freight because we must run, as I said to begin with, the railways as a commercial proposition. And we want to know from the hon. Minister what rationale does he have for the present level of fares and for the increase that he has suggested in the budget. He has not given us the unit cost. He has not told us how he has come to these beautiful figures.

We know that the railway facilities are being outstripped by the rising population. The sight of trains being overloaded with passengers on the roofs, passengers between the coaches is not an uncommon sight. One of the reasons, in my opinion, is the so-called modernisation. In fact, I would like to call it elitisation. The Railways have become more and more an instrument of services to the elite. I would like to propose to the hon. Minister and this House, through you, Mr. Chairman, that we entirely abolish the air-conditioned coaches. After all, we have travelled for hundreds of years without air-conditioning. Surely, the Indian elite and the bureaucracy and the Railway employees can travel like ordinary mortals in ordinary coaches.

Let us just have only two classes—one class for short journey in which there should be sitting accommodation for every passenger and another for long over-night journey in which there should be a uniform type of sleeping accommodation for all passengers. So, we shall really have only two classes—the sitting class and the sleeping class. The facilities shall be uniform—whatever be the status of the individual passenger. I think if this is done, automatically—even keeping the number of trains and coaches constant—the number of passengers, the carrying capacity will increase.

Coming to my fifth suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister, I find that there are growing nodal points. Patna is one of them. It is not a metropolitan city but there is a large growing passenger traffic which flows into the city in the morning and flows out in the evening. Why cannot we have a separate channel—a parallel line—laid out for distances say upto twenty miles on each side of such nodal points which provide employment to the people? Let that channel be completely independent of the through track. Most of the time, lack of punctuality is being caused and delay are caused because of this local traffic. In fact the local traffic interferes even with the facilities provided to the through passengers. Therefore, I would suggest that for every city, which is a growing nodal point and draws people, and generates traffic which comes in the morning and goes out in the evening, there should be a parallel railway track to cater to the catchment area.

I find that catering in the Railways is absolutely abysmal. The quality is going down. I do not know why the Thali system was abolished. It was replaced by this—I do not know how I should describe it—disgusting dispensation in which you are given an aluminium foil with layers of waxed paper. You cannot eat properly. I would suggest to the Hon'ble Minister that the present system should be abolished, particularly because the kitchen car in the train continues to be a part of the train. It has not been abolished though the idea was that once you have got ready-made food prepared at some important stations then at least one more coach will be available can be utilised for passenger traffic. That is not so. Therefore, I would suggest that let us revert back to the old system and improve the catering.

Finally, there is a lot of talk about corruption. I would like to inform the Hon'ble Minister that particularly in recruitment to the railways, in the functioning of the Railway Board, the odour of corruption is reaching intolerable limits I think it is time that the Hon'ble Minister and the Government look into it and devise methods so that this corruption in recruitment and booking is, at least, minimised. One way of doing it will be that the clerical staff recruitment can be transferred to the appropriate authorities and only the recruitment of technical staff should be made by the Railway Commission. I would suggest that the likely number of vacancies for each category must be announced in advance with the scheme of examination and with the marks obtained by the candidates in the written examination and in the interview should be published and each candidate should have access to this vital information.

I would like to make one more point about the railway land. As I travel across the country, I find a lot of land which belongs to the Railways, unutilised, lying fallow. In general there is no intensive agriculture in our country. I would suggest that some arrangement should be made so that the land which is not in immediate use of the Railways although it is possessed and owned by the Railways, is available to the neighbouring cultivators for agriculture, horticulture and forestry—right upto the railway track to the nearest practicable limits. That land will not then be wasted and add to the agricultural production of the country.

I would like to make a point about my own constituency—Kishenganj which lies between Katihar and New Jalpaiguri. A new track is laid between Katihar and New Jalpaiguri. I hope that the situation will be eased with this. In the meantime, the Hon'ble Minister may consider extending the through trains from Delhi which are running only upto Katihar, to New Jalpaiguri. I think an assurance was given on the floor of the House about the Mahananda Express, to extend it from Katihar right upto New Jalpaiguri. This has not been done.

Finally, Sir, I would suggest that in order to cut down railway accidents, a system of incentives and penalties must be introduced. There have been a large number of accidents of late in which clearly the human factor was involved. In order to

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eliminate the human factor, there has to be an effective system of incentives and rewards on the one hand, and of penalties and punishment, on the other, and I would like the hon. Minister to look into this situation.

Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity and I request the hon. Minister to consider the points which I have raised.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Members who have participated in the Railway Budget on Saturday and of course today also, and who have given quite valuable suggestions. While thanking them for their participation I would like to just intervene on some of the points made by the hon. Members.

Sir, Railways play a pivotal role in the nation's life both in terms of transportation of goods and in terms of passengers. However, we are all concerned with the fact that punctuality of passenger trains is not satisfactory. Sir, as we have taken over, we have given a strict direction and it is being monitored, and it has also been mentioned in the Budget speech that now gradually the punctuality performance is improved. However, this is not the point where one should get contented, but we must try our best to see that punctuality is much more improved, so much so the travelling passengers will not be subject to unnecessary hardships.

Apart from punctuality, the Government is very keen to see that the safety and security of the passengers is ensured. When we talk about safety, of course some of the Members have also mentioned that we have to take into account the accidents and other types of things. No doubt the trend of accidents on Indian Railways is coming down. Still we cannot be content by that. We have to contain the accidents and there are certain human failures also which have to be checked and advice has been given to those who are responsible for safety. They are being trained also to check the human failure.

Sir, so far as the security is concerned, the security on Indian Railways also depends upon the State Governments because law and order is the subject which ought to be looked after by the State Governments. However, from the security point of view Railways also provide some escort and other things.

Sir, this is how the present Government with conviction is proceeding further to see that the punctuality of the trains is maintained and safety and security is also dealt with properly.

As we all have been experiencing, manual reservation for a long time, and even now, was one of the problems for the poor travellers on Indian Railways. So, keeping this in view, as early as in 1980, the then Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, with her vision, agreed for computerisation of passenger reservations. That is how this project was started and now everyone should be happy to know that computers are made available for reservations in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Hyderabad. Apart from that, in some other important stations these projects are taken up now. In the present Railway Budget itself, some of the stations have been included. They are, Varanasi, Vadodara, Agra, Jodhpur, Coimbatore, Nagpur, Tiruchirappalli and Surat. By completing all these projects in time, I think, we will be able to cover about 70 per cent of passenger reservations through computers. I do not have to lay much emphasis on computerisation because in the modern world, it has become one of the essential ingredients for the proper administration and other related matters.

Then, we are taking up a trial programme for freight movement. It will commence by the end of this year. When I speak about computerisation, I cannot forget Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who was instrumental not only for computerisation in Indian Railways but for advancement in Indian economy also through science and technology. So, by promoting computerisation in Indian Railways, I once again salute Shri Rajiv Gandhi for his foresight. I hope within 10 years or so, even the freight operation information system will be computerised. As far as passenger reservation is concerned, it will be covered within five or six years.

Sir, the hon. Member Shri Ram Naik, while speaking about computerisation, made an enquiry about computerisation in Borivilli. I want to inform him that the work is in progress and the facility is expected to be made available before December this year.

Sir, through this House, I want to appeal to the people in reducing the ticketless travelling in Indian Railways; they should be patriotic in the sense that none should prefer ticketless travelling because it is an offence. Now, we have increased the fine for ticketless travelling from Rs. 10/- to Rs. 50/-. All these things are secondary; the primary thing is that the citizens should be conscious and for a little thing if a citizen indulges in such type of things, it will affect the functional integrity of the Railways. In 1990-91, we could recover an amount of Rs. 25 crores from ticketless travellers compared to the previous year's figure of Rs. 23 crores. Then, ticketless travelling becomes an interruption to the bonafide travellers because the ticketless travellers come and occupy the seats of bonafide passengers.

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): You have no idea as to how much money is lost to the Railways because of ticketless travel. Nobody has got any idea. No survey has ever been conducted.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: That is what I am telling. If the Railways have got the recovery of Rs. 24 crores in a year, it would be more.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: That is neither here; nor there. You are getting thousand crores of rupees from the passengers. How much money is lost due to ticketless travel? It may be Rs. 250 crores, Rs. 300 crores or even thousand crores. I would like you to be able to explain why is it that the Railways had not at least carried out survey so that we can know the extent of loss to the Railways due to ticketless travelling. I have myself brought this question up with many Railway Ministers but nobody has taken any effective step so far.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: If the survey has not been done, I do not know what exactly has been done. We will take the suggestion of the hon. Member.

We are so strong on this point that drives against ticketless travel are going to be conducted and we will see that ticketless travels get reduced and recovery will be more and window selling will also go up. That is a kind of indirect revenue to the Railways.

Initiating the debate, hon. Member, Shri, Anna Joshi emphasised on electrification. The Government is very conscious that electrification is essentially required on Indian Railways both in terms of energy conservation and for other performance reasons. As we all know, already 10083 route kms. have been electrified and in the Eighth Plan, we propose to electrify another 3,000 route kms.

Now the hon. Member, who is also my good friend, Shri George Fernandes is not here. Still I feel I must make a reference to what he

[Sh. Mallikarjun]

said. He mentioned that just a meagre amount of Rs. 607 crores has been allocated for rolling stock compared to Rs. 680 crores in the previous year. Here, I have to bring to the knowledge of the august House that we have the Indian Railway Finance Corporation. This year, this Corporation is going to create about Rs. 1500 crores bonds. The laid-down policy of the Railway is that whatever the finances which the Indian Railway Finance Corporation provides will be put in for the rolling stock. That is how Rs. 1500 crores is added to Rs. 607 crores and it comes to Rs. 2107 crores. Last year, it was just Rs. 1850 crores.

SHRI AMAL DATTA: The Budget speech delivered by the hon. Railway Minister does not indicate that the entire sum of Rs. 1500 crores which is to be raised by issue of Railway bonds will be put in the rolling stock.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: I am committing it before Parliament in the intervention. If it is not in the Budget speech, it makes no difference. Whatever amount which the Indian Railway Finance Corporation is raising will be put in the rolling stock.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a policy matter and the hon. Minister must take the House into confidence.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is shortly going to take the House into confidence.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: The hon. Minister is stating it before the House now. Why did he not do so earlier.

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: The actual position is that in the current year, the Railways have provided altogether a sum of Rs. 2107 crores for the rolling stock. Our production units in particular are doing very well.

CLW produced 110 EMUs last year. Last year, it has produce 147 diesel locomotives. [at a cost of Rs. 40 crores.]

So also the Integral Coach Factory.

The Railway Coach Factory at Kapurthala made a record production of 600 coaches during the year. 1990-91 which is beyond the imagination and expectation. That is how we also applaud the workers who have been employed in these production units. Even otherwise railway employees deserve all appreciation for their alertness and duty consciousness.

This is how we have to view the rolling-stock. In spite of all this, the Indian Railways is short of the required rolling-stock. We have to take care of it in future with different types of innovations on Indian Railways.

Hon. Member Shri George Fernandes referred to the staff quarters. He has mentioned that about Rs. 38 crores only have been allocated in the present Budget for the staff quarters compared to Rs. 40 crores. In this connection, I have to mention that Indian Railway Welfare Organisation is there. Last year, Rs. 8 crores have been given as seed capital to the Indian Railway Welfare Organisation. This Organisation is doing service to the railwaymen in acquiring land and other things. Rs. 8 crores has been given as seed capital to this particular Organisation last year. That is how it has gone up to Rs. 40 crores. This time also, provisionally about Rs. 10 crores are going to the Indian Railways Welfare Organisation. This is the Organisation which is cooperating and that is how the Railways have been associated with them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rs. 10 crores is in addition to Rs. 38 crores.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Yes. Some hon. Members referred to the over-bridges. In all States, a number of over-bridges have been demanded by the hon. Members and it has to take a practical form. But, however, I have to make a mention here. So far as road over-bridges are concerned, the State Government is to take 50% of the estimated cost. I appeal to the hon. Members who are keen for road over-bridges to take up with the State Governments. So far as the Railways are concerned, we have no problem to meet the other 50% portion of the share.

Shri Dharam Pal Singh Malik Ji has mentioned about road over-bridge in Haryana. It is lying with the State Government. The moment it is cleared, there will be no problem on the part of the railways to proceed further.

Hon. and good friend Shri Amal Datta Ji has made many references. He placed vital emphasis on research and also mentioned that the allocation of Rs. 5 crores is insufficient for research. We have an Organisation RDSO. This is certainly doing a great job. Shri Amal Datta Ji has mentioned about Rs. 5 crores. It is Rs. 5 crores. But in the Budget itself, we have ear-marked about Rs. 21 crores for recurring expenditure. Research is one of the basic factors which we have to encourage. Now, they are coming out with Plans and I quote:

> "...A technology development Plan has been prepared by the RDSO which invisages an investment of Rs. 280 crores under this Plan. It is proposed to develop Railway technology within the country to come at par with the developed countries...."

So, Sir, we are very conscious about all these things. We have taken necessary, required steps for the augmentation of research work and for the encouragement to the research scientists, engineers and others.

One of the most important point which we are facing is about conservation of energy. In any case, we are going to phase-out the steam traction by the end of 2000 AD. This was also raised by hon. Shri Ramaiah. He said that we should phase-out the steam traction. It is a laid down policy. But at the same time, we are concentrating on electric traction and diesel traction so much so there will be conservation of energy in this way.

One hon. Member Shri Ayub Khan made a very good point that in the light of the advancement of science and technology why not we have a communication system among the Guard, Driver and the Control Room. Railways are working on it and shortly it will be introduced between the electrified section like Durg-Nagpur which is on Howrah-Bombay route; between Nagpur-Itarsi or Delhi-Madras route and Itarsi-Bhusawal or Delhi-Bombay route which will be about a distance of 862 Kms. With this approach, the communication among the Guard, Driver and Control Room will be covered. At the same time, work has also been sanctioned on the Delhi-Mugalsari section covering a distance of 750 route Kms. on the Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani route. We are trying to take advantage of the advancement of telecommunication and other scientific aspects of it.

Another hon. Member Dr. Shridharan desired that the Villupuram-Madurai section should be taken up for electrification. This is not possible because of the traffic density and other factors....(*Interruptions*)

Again, hon. Member Shri Ayub Khan desired Delhi-Ahmedabad conversion. This is a dense trunk route which is really functioning very well and if we go for it, it will need a huge investment, which will disrupt the Metre-gauge location itself because different routes are connected with this.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL (Godda): Will the 'Shatabadi Express' pass through your constituency?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: After passing through my constituency, it will go to your constituency.

[*English*]

SHRI AMAL DATTA: I would like them to clarify if they will take a definite stand or whether they are going to convert the Metre-Gauge to Broad-Gauge everywhere or whether they are going to stop it or whether they are going to upgrade the Metre-Gauge or whether they are stopping this conversion altogether. A policy decision has to be taken by the Government. It cannot be postponed anymore. They are not saying anything on that.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: So far as the Metre-Gauge is concerned, for example, the Delhi-Ahmedabad Metre-Gauge was upgraded. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIV CHARAN MATHUR (Bhilwara): How can the conversion be alternatively replaced by this upgradation?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: It is not by mixing up. Conversion is different. This has been upgraded in the sense to meet the speeding up of the train. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHIV CHARAN MATHUR: If it is speeding up of the train, that is all right. But conversion cannot take place with upgradation.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: That is what I am telling. It is not the alternative to convert the Delhi-Ahmedabad section. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government for the last so many years have been giving assurance for the conversion of Delhi-Ahmedabad metre gauge into broad gauge, but till date neither the conversion nor the upgradation of the line has been completed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please don't interrupt. The question of conversion of Delhi-Ahmedabad railway line is being discussed.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: This demand is being raised constantly. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: There are eleven gauge conversions in the pipeline and 24 new lines are in the pipeline. It needs, at the moment, Rs. 3,500 crores for its completion. Keeping in view the constraints of funds, we had to take a decision like that. However, the Government has to strengthen the MG lines. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: By when Delhi-Ahmedabad line be doubled (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt. This is not Question Hour.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Is it a policy decision that you are going to upgrade and not convert any more lines?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt. Kindly take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: That aspect will be replied to tomorrow by the Minister.

Dr. Sridharan desired that the Chengalpet-Madurai section be doubled. Doubling of railway line is carried out as per the traffic needs. Traffic intensive and saturated sections are given priority. Traffic moving in this section does not require doubling for the present. It will be considered as and when the need develops.

As regards more funds for Karur-Dindigal project is concerned, I would like to mention that suitable higher amount of Rs. 18 crores has been earmarked in this year's Budget. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANBARASU ERA (Madras Central): That is a very very meagre sum. This project has been pending for the last fifteen years. When the previous Member Shri K. D. Kothandaraman was there, he fought for this project for a long time. And now you are allocating this paltry sum for this. It is a very meagre sum. Kindly come forward with some more funds. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: I do not have to say anything. Whatever amount is allocated by the Planning Commission for the construction of new lines, this is the share that Karur-Dindigal line could get. At the same time, Karur-Madurai parallel broad gauge line is in progress. That will be completed by 1992-93.

Another Member Shri Wasnik desired that the Jalana-Badaun line, for which survey has been carried out should be taken up for construction. The anticipated cost for this 165 kilo metre long line has been estimated at Rs. 133 crores as per the survey report. The rate of return of the project was negatived, making the project financially not viable. Due to constraint of resources the project has not been taken up.

Shri Dharam Pal Singh has mentioned about more trains between Delhi and Sonepat. Already, there are twenty pairs of trains running and out of it ten pairs are the passenger trains. This is the present position.

14.09 hrs. [SHRI P. M. SAYEED *in the Chair.*]

Shrimati B. Rajeswari raised the point about the freight payment for coal passage by the Karnataka State Electricity Board. I am glad to inform the hon. Member that with the new augmentation in the transport capacity by the shortest route, coal is now moving by the shortest route and freight charges are being levied accordingly. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: With these words, I conclude my speech with great hope and anticipation from the hon. Members that they will understand the inherent reality. I thank you very much. (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister gave an assurance regarding Patna-Gaya railway line. He himself admitted in the house the demand of doubling the Patna line. This railway line is necessary but the work can't be started due to lack of funds. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is a proposal for doubling the Patna-Gaya railway line? (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramashray Prasad Singh, tomorrow the hon. Minister will speak in the House. You bring all your points to the notice of the hon. Minister, which will be replied by him.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SATYNARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain): I want to draw the attention towards a very important issue of stoppage of coal transportation. (*Interruptions*) Whole of the industry is in danger, due to stoppage of coal transportation, due to shortage of wagons. As the required number of wagons are not available for transporting coal, the entire industry is on the verge of closure.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): At the time of introducing the Railway Budget, we pleaded with the Railway Minister for reinstatement of victimised Railway force. He has to reply for it.

[*Translation*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please remain present in the House when the hon. Railway Minister gives reply and then you may seek clarifications.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARVIND NETAM (Kankar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Railways play a pivotal role in the nation's life both in terms of transportation and industrialisation. In our country Railways is a vital organisation and is employing approximately 18.5 lakh people. Railway network did expand before independence as well as after independence, but the pace of expansion did slow down after 1947. For the development of backward regions of the country, every effort needs to be made by the Government of India to expand the railway network.

In the budget speech, the hon. Minister of Railways laid emphasis on the replacement of coaches. Railways has 28,000 coaches and the need of replacing 5,500 coaches has been underfined. But how can so many coaches be replaced as the target of replacing coaches is just 500 annually. It will take too many years for completing this work of replacement of coaches. Some steps need to be taken, to expedite the replacement of coaches so as to improve the functioning of railways. In the annual plan the allocation has been increased by just Rs. 325 crore for 1991-92. I would like to impress upon the Government of India to further increase the size of annual plan, as the increase of Rs. 325 crore is not a modest increase, but only a meagre increase to facilitate the Ministry of Railways in improving the railway facilities in the country.

Sir, through you I would like to highlight the demands of my region and of my constituency The laying of Dalli-Rajhara-Bailadila line on South Central Railway is under consideration of the Ministry for many years.

Though the railway line was proposed to be constructed from Dalli-Rajhara to Bailadila to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Steel and Mines but as per the latest information the necessity to fulfil the requirements of Ravghat is being considered more important than that of Bailadila. Therefore, my submission is that the Ministry of Railways as well as the Government of India should review the situation and the line should be extended from Dalli-Rajhara to Bailadila rather than to Ravghat so that the backward area of Bastar district can avail the facility of railway line. When good quality of mines are already in operation, there is no need to open other mines. Iron ore can be extracted from the existing mines. It would be useful in two ways—the quality would improve and the railway facility would also be provided to this area. I think that by connecting Bailadila it would become easy to provide iron ore not only to Bhilai Steel Plant but also to other steel plants of the country at the time of emergency.

Therefore, I would like the Government to review the proposal, because it would be a major source to connect Dallirajhara to Bailadila. The project should be expedited so that the work may be started at the earliest and the Bhilai Steel Plant gets the supply of iron ore in time.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Raipur-Dhamtari is a narrow gauge line and there has been a long standing demand of converting it into broad gauge. I would urge upon the Minister to take measures to fulfil this demand.

Similarly if one wants to go to Central India from Jabalpur, Gondia *via* Varanasi, Lucknow, Allahabad etc. one has to move *via* Itarasi, Raipur to reach Central India. If Jabalpur-Gondia line is connected, it would provide a shortcut to reach the Central India through Grand Trunk route from Allahabad and Varanasi. I would like the Ministry to pay its attention on this point.

A railway line has been constructed from Bechak to Bailadila in collaboration with Japan. Since its construction it is being used to transport iron ore only. I would like that a common train to be used for passenger traffic and transporting goods should be run there so that the things of common use can be transported to the people of this area and the can avail of the railway facilities. The Hon. Minister, in this way your State and our State will have a link with each other.

There are captive mines, a plant and a railway yard in my constituency Dalli-Rajhara. A large tract of Railway land is lying vacant there where the employees working in mines and many other people have built their house on it and still considerable land is lying unacquired there. I would like the people who live on that land at Dalli-Raihara line may be settled there so that the basic facilities like water, electricity etc. are provided to them and roads are constructed there. Until the concerned Ministry takes initiative in this respect, people of that area would not be able to get the basic facilities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there has also been a long standing demand for the construction of an over-bridge in Bhilai. When Shri Madhavrao Scindia was the Minister of Railways and Shri Vora was the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, an assurance to construct an over-bridge there was given. I would like that the bridge should be constructed immediately so that the traffic bottleneck may be removed.

Similarly, there is a vast scope of improvement in regard to the catering facilities in Railways. I would like the hon. Minister to pay his attention to it.

Today, the feeling of insecurity in the minds of people is increasing day by day. Special attention should be paid towards this also. Attention should be paid to the cleanliness in trains. I hope the hon. Minister will pay his attention towards this.

A train named "Samta Express" has been started from Vishakhapatnam to Delhi *via* Raipur, Nagpur. I would like to state that this train should be run every day so that people of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh may have some relief. I would like the hon. Minister to pay his attention towards this and take action. Thank you.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Railway Budget of this year is like stale food which is reheated and served......

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Chimur): Perhaps, you are following the same practice, sometimes at your home?

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: No. we do not follow it. Give us a chance and we will let you know how it is done. I have merely stated how you do it....(*Interruptions*)...

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN (SHRI P. M. SAYEED): Kindly stop giving running commentary, otherwise you will be cutting short your own time.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: As I have already stated that this Budget is very much like old Budget with minor modifications. It neither provide facilities to common people nor proposes any improvement in services.

Sir, though a lot has been said and the Minister of Railways has stated that successful efforts have been made in regard to transporation of goods. The account of goods transported has been shown in tonnes. My submission is that it is true that efforts have been made to transport maximum quantity of goods. but if we review the whole situation it becomes evident that the majority of goods which have been transported are coal. cement. foodgrains and petroleum products and the goods which were left include cotton. sugar. edible oil. because 89-90 wagons are available for the coal. cement etc. and no more capacity is left for these things. Every point was considered in respect of transportation of goods but no consideration has been made in respect of industries specially sick industries.

There are sick industries in Madhya Pradesh. My submission is that 40 to 45 per cent transportation is that of coal and even the full quantity of coal cannot be transported through railway wagons. It has to be sent afterwards also. If we take account of the position. we find that a goods train with 30 wagons takes about 1700 tonnes of coal in one trip. If the same quantity of coal is taken through road transport. about 150 trucks will have to be engaged. My submission is that maximum quantity of coal should be transported through trains. and actually it is not being done. particularly in Madhya Pradesh. Mr. Chairman. Sir. I would like to inform the hon. Minister that the loading and transportation of coal are not being done properly in Madhya Pradesh. making sick industries more sick. thus creating labour problem.

In case of Indore. there are only 149 wagons or 5 trains provided for the transportation of coal. Thus only 45 per cent of coal in January. 30 per cent in May and 15 per cent in June was transported. In Ujjain coal transportation did not even take place during these two months. The same is the case with Bhopal and Rajnandgaon, Bumpur etc. Thus the whole of Madhya Pradesh remained neglected due to which industries are suffering a lot there. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways towards it. My submission is that we should make better utilisation of transport capacity. Sometimes unloading takes place at fixed time. The fixed time for unloading coal is 5 hours. But if the unloading is not done in the fixed time. the wagons remain unused even for the next day They cannot be used elsewhere. During the second world war, unloading was went on day and night with the result the cotton industry never suffered. Therefore. this practice of unloading in a fixed time should be stopped and it should be done day and night. so that the wagons should not remain unused. For loading also. the wagons remain lying unused for two-three days. In this regard. the hon. Minister can say that demurrage charges are taken. But we should not only think of demurrage charges. We should think about the entire industry. about maximum loading and maximum utilisation of wagons. Other items are transported by road. Railway transportation facility should also be provided for these items. In this way. the entire wagon capacity will be available for coal. It has been mentioned that the employees should perform their duties with full enthusiasm and devotion. The coaches of passenger trains are also in worse condition as the wagons of goods trains are. The hon. Minister should go himself and observe the condition of the wagons of goods trains and the coach of the guard. I have myself seen the condition of trains running between Ujjain and Indore in Madhya Pradesh. Since I have to speak.

I have inspected all these things. I was told that both the engine driver and guard have indicator of a particular pressure. But the said indicator was missing from the guard's coach. I asked him how does he come to know about the movement without indicator. He said, he just makes a guess. It seems that the trains are running at the God's mercy. It is different, if we work at the God's mercy...(*Interruptions*)... I have myself seen the condition of the passenger coaches and goods wagons. Some may not believe in God but the trains are running at God's mercy. Indicators are missing from the Guards coaches. Once the necessary nuts and bolts come out, no one bothers to check and replace them. The hon. Minister says that the employees should work with devotion. They fulfil the dream, but it will not be possible in this way...(*Interruptions*). I need time to express my views.

SHRI RAJNATH SANKAR SHASHTRI: Where is the hon. Minister gone, when discussion is going on on the Railway Budget. This is gross disrespect of the House...(*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has gone with my permission.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: The hon. Minister has come back. My speech will not go at the God's mercy. The condition of passenger coaches is as worse as earlier. Last year also, I have mentioned it in this House that the train running between Indore and Bilaspur is in a pitiable condition. Besides this, there are other things also, such as non compliance of the railway rules. The coaches meant for military personnel are attached from Bhopal whereas this train starts from Indore. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this train. This train is not regular. The metre guage line in Indore......

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): What does the hon. Member mean? Should one depend on God's mercy?

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: I want to say that one should do one's work with faith in God. In fact Indore is an important region in respect of industry, revenue and other things, though the entire Madhya Pradesh is an important region. In spite of all these things, the entire Madhya Pradesh is neglected so far as railway facilities are concerned. Similarly, my constituency Indore is also neglected in this respect. Every year, there is little increase in the Budget allocations for the Maksi-Indore-Dahod line. Although this Project is estimated at Rs. 300 crore, last year the allocation was Rs. 5 crore only and in the current year, an amount of Rs. 11 crore has been provided. How long it will take to complete this project, if the funds are provided in this manner. It will take 30-35 years. I would request that this project should be completed at the earliest. The current allocation in this regard is like a drop in the Ocean.

The Khadwa-Ajmer line from Indore is 108 year old. No attention was paid to it before independence or in these forty years of their rule. This line should be improved. This is an important railway track, but no effort has been made to bring about improvement in it. Last year also, I had mentioned about this track in my speech last year too. But, it appears that due to the continuous change in Government and Ministers, no progress is being made in this regard and the public has to face hardships. I would request the hon. Minister that even if the Ministers change, the papers and the schemes should be maintained and attention should be paid to them and the necessary improvements should be brought about.

Passenger fare and freight rates have also been increased. While announcing this increase, it was said that this is a slight increase. On paper, it appears to be slight, but I would like to draw your attention to this

[Smt. Sumitra Mahajan]

fact that for the last three years, there has been a gradual increase which has totalled to nearby 40 per cent. It has also been said that this increase in freight rates and passenger fare will not affect the people. But, I would like to submit that despite the fact that freight rates on essential commodities has not been increased, it will affect the people, as it would lead to price-rise. It may be so that in comparison to other countries, there might not be much increase in prices in our country. But, actually, the wages of people in our country are very meagre in comparison to other countries. They have provided very negligible relief in comparison to the heavy burden they have imposed on the people. And this is too much for the people of this poor country. I oppose this increase.

Regarding development of Madhya Pradesh, very little attention has been paid to it. Some attention should also be paid to it. A new train, like Rajdhani Express, has been introduced from Bombay. But there is not even a single stoppage in the entire Madhya Pradesh. Rajdhani Express stops at Ratlam. Therefore, there should be a stoppage of this new train at Nagda, if not at Ratlam in Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL (Godda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Railway—Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways truly reflects the saying, penny wise pound foolish. The increase in the IInd class fare is a burden on the poor. I would like to submit before this House that it has no knowledge about the lower levels of the Railways. During 1966 to 1969 I was an ordinary employee in the Asansol division of the Railways with a monthly income of Rs. 52 only. If they really want to improve the Railways, they should check the malpractices that are prevalent in the Railways, such as big contracts for goods transportation. Everything can be set right if malpractices are brought under control.

Secondly, every year, the Ministry has to pay a huge amount in settlement of claims for lost goods at every station. The railway booking staff also have a hand in it. For example ten pieces of an item are booked. One piece is stolen and then the claim is made for all the ten pieces.

Same is the case with the R.P.F. which is known in jest, as "Ration Pani Free". These people should also be prevented from indulging in such malpractices. Only then, there can be improvement. Mr. Chairman, Sir. I have a lot to say, but due to the shortage of time, I will only say that it is the corruption which is responsible for losses to the Railways. The suppliers, who supply goods to the Railway Board are in connivance with the employees of the Railway Board and supply their goods at higher rates.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, after independence, there has not been any noticeable improvement in the basic railway facilities in our area and consequently the people are facing a lot of difficulties. Our area contributes 40% of the total coal production in the country. Although coal is transported by rails from our Jharkhand region, not even a single inch of railway track has been laid in this area, since independence. Even today the same passenger train passes through that area which passed through prior to my birth. The condition has not changed even a wee bit. Even today, I travel by that very train to my constituency. New trains are introduced in those areas, where there are already too many trains. While, trains catering to the poor people are almost negligible or nil, the number of

Air Conditioned trains, Superfast trains like Shatabdi Express, is being increased. We have very few trains in our region, but if you go to Calcutta, especially Howrah station, you will see multitude of the people emerging out of the various trains. The Asansol-Burdwan line is yet to be constructed, China-Clay is available in plenty in Paharpur-Rajmahal spread over a 20 Kilometre area and a railway line should be constructed between Nalmatiya and Farakka, for its transportation. What can be worse than this, that to date you have not been able to construct even an 88 kilometre railway line in that area out of which 80 kilometres falls within the Santhal Pargana, while the rest of 8 kilometres are in West Bengal. Even the Railway office has been set up at Malda. Moreover, none of the persons, whose land has been acquired by the Railways, in that 80 kilometre area of Santhal Pargana, has been provided with any kind of employment and whatever meagre facilities were there, have been shifted to Malda. When Shri Ghani Khan Chowdhury was the Railway Minister, he established a Railway Division at Malda. The Loco shed situated in Madhupur in our region too was shifted to Malda, the moment Shri Chowdhury became the Railway Minister. When Shri Scindia took charge as the Railway Minister, he introduced Shatabdi Express upto Gwalior, but when it came to our region, he too turned a blind eye. No Railway Minister, including Shri Jagdish Narayan Mandal, paid any attention towards Santhal Pargana. Earlier our headquarter was based at Dumka. Later on, Santhal Pargana was made a separate district, then a Railway Division and an office of the Divisional Commissioner was also set up, but to date no railway line has been constructed and the existing facilities have not been expanded. You had to lay just 67 kilometres of railway line, at an estimated cost of Rs. 27 crores, but nothing was done. The Railways are earning millions of rupees from transportation of coal and iron ore from our region, but they are reluctant to construct a 67 kilometre rail strip. You could not arrange an amount of Rs. 27 crores for an area, from where you are minting millions. Thus, railway did not make any contribution towards the development of Santhal Pargana. Much before independence, there was a temple atop Mandar Hill. Lakhs of people used to walk on foot all the way from Bhagalpur to the Mandar hills to pay obeisance to the Deity. A Railway line was constructed upto Mandar Hill for the convenience of the devotees, but no effort has been made since independence, to fulfil the long pending demand of the people of that region, to extend that railway line upto the district headquarters at Godda, which is also incidentally my constituency and located barely 20 kilometres away from Mandar Hill.

Do you know why there is no industry worth the name in Santhal Pargana, despite the fact that it is rich in natural resources like coal, iron; China-Clay etc.? It is only because the transportation facilities are inadequate. Industrialists who plan to set up industries there, change their mind once they come to know about the lack of transportation and other infrastructural facilities there. As I said earlier, to date no effort has been made to improve the railway facilities there. I request the hon. Railway Minister to stand by the assurance given on 5-3-1987 by the Government in this very House in response to question No 1380 raised by an hon. Member Shri Salakuddin Ansari that the railway facilities in that area would be improved and railway network expanded, on the availability of adequate funds. A survey committee was also constituted at that time. Another committee consisting of then the hon. M.Ps was also formed to over see the construction of railway lines in our area. The Government received its report long back, but so far no action has been taken on the recommendations of that committee.

I would like to know by when you purpose to lay the railway tracks and

[Sh. Suraj Mandal]

expand railway services in Santhal Pargana. Is it that only the squeaking wheel will get the oil or do you propose to make available railway facilities to the poor and helpless also who bear everything silently and do not protest or agitate? Today, 70 per cent of the tribals lead a hand to mouth existence, they do not get even two square meals a day and do not possess adequate clothes to even cover themselves. How much more time will you take to construct a railway line upto the headquarters to Santhal Pargana. Do you have any plans to do so or not? If not, I would like to make one thing clear that the local populace won't allow you to take even a particle of coal and iron ore. They won't hesitate to block the railway tracks. Coal mined at the S.P. Mines in Santhal Pargana is sent to the Barauni Thermal Power Station and many other places but because no railway facilities like sidings exist there, the coal is loaded into trucks and sent to the Salanpur Yard situated in West Bengal. Although coal is produced at the S.P. Mines, the Sales Centre is shown in the documents as Salanpur. Thus, the Bihar Government is deprived of the sales tax also, as the sales takes place in West Bengal, causing loss of lakhs of rupees to the State Government. There used to be a P.W.I. siding for the use of Eastern Coal fields limited at the Vidyasagar Railway Station, where goods were loaded and unloaded, but today even that Siding is non-functional. In this regard, I had written to the Managing Director of E.C.L. (Eastern Coalfields Limited) and when I was a Member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly, I referred this matter to the then Union Railway Minister, Shri George Fernandes but he replied that it was not a suitable place to construct a siding. This, a siding which could be constructed with a little amount, was not built. You would be surprised to know that E.C.L. set apart a handsome amount of Rupees two crores for the modernization plans of the Railways which include estimate of jeeps also. However, when it came to the construction of a siding, they backed out saying that they cannot afford the construction a siding. Thus, the siding was not constructed, as a result of which coal is transported in tracks to Salanpur, which lies 66 kilometres away from the mines. The Vidyasagar Railway Station is at a distance of just 24 kilometres from the S.P. Mines and it would be better if you lay a railway line from Madhupur to Vidyasagar and then extend it to Dumka and then via the coal mines at Palasthali Guru to Seemlong. Right now, coal is transported in trucks from Rajmahal to Farakka. Thus, construction of a railway line has become very necessary. If a line is laid, it would not only enrich you through freight charges, but would also accelerate the development process in the area. Therefore, I request the hon. Railway Minister to provide railway facilities to the local population, by constructing a railway line there.

Sir, now I would like to speak a few words about Ranchi, the headquarter of Santhal Pargana. Offices overseeing development works all over Bihar are located there, but the people of Santhal Pargana have no trains to reach Ranchi. All the bureaucrats sit in Delhi. During the tenure of the previous Government, we received a reply from the then hon. Minister of Railways in response to our letter to him, that he had got examined our request from the officers and that in their opinion, it was not feasible. We are the representatives of the people, therefore, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that he should pay more attention to the views and opinions of the people's representatives and not to the reports submitted by Government officials.

Sir, there is a great need to introduce a train in the evening between Jasdih and Ranchi. Today, there are superfast trains including ones like Shatabdi Express that links Delhi with the various State capitals and major cities like Jaipur and Gwalior, but no Superfast train plies between Delhi and Ranchi. Yo do not want to provide even basic transport facilities to the people there. Then how can Bihar or that region make progress? There is only one train, namely Chandigarh Express, that links Delhi with Ranchi, but this one which starts from Chandigarh goes via Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Khajuraho, Singrauli etc. reaches Ranchi after three days. Therefore, it is my earnest request to the hon. Minister that a superfast train linking Delhi with Ranchi should be introduced soon. Moreover, I would also like to submit that the demands for introducing trains at many places plying on the Patna-Mughalsarai-Howrah routes, should be fulfilled. Only then we would be able to provide some convenience to the common people, the poor and the farmers.

Sir, I would also like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards goods trains service and ticketless travellers. Similarly, there are so many complaints about the bunglings in reservation. A visit to the Patna Reservation Office would be an enlightening one, in this regard. There seats are reserved under bogus names. One day, I went there to purchase a ticket for Howrah.

A man who keeps standing there asks every person who buys ticket if he wants reservation and if so, to which place. He enquired from me as well and I asked upto what point could he manage reservation for me. He replied that he could immediately manage reservation for me as per my need. They are in league with the booking office. If you pay them twenty five rupees you will get reservation for any destination in India. You go to the Station and you will find that the people who buy tickets do not get reservation. The conductor would look at the Sardarji, who in turn would make gestures with his hand and the conductor will take him comfortably in A.C. two-tier. Same is the case with Patna reservation office. It has become the normal practice that the upper berths are given to M.L.As and the people who bribed the conductors, will get comfortable berths of their choice, where, they can sleep also easily throughout their journey. You just imagine the fun that the people travelling without ticket are getting more and more facilities and the ticket-holders are being ignored. The employees of the Ministry of Railways are creating this feeling among the people that ticketless passengers get more facilities, than the ticket-holders. Therefore, they have to adopt a short cut method and get suitable berths by bribing the conductors. These wrong practices should be stopped. With these words, I thank everyone and urge the Government to construct the railway lines in Santhal Pargana, Jasidiha, Dumka and Godda and I hope that it would be done in right earnest.

[*English*]

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to take part in the discussion on the Railway Budget with a mixed feeling. The hon. Railway Minister has to be complimented for taking care not to have an excessive dose in the railway fares for the people and his proposals to take certain steps to streamline the railway administration and also the steps he has taken to improve the conditions of the railway employees. But on the other hand, I am very much disillusioned that this Budget is nothing but a *status quo*; this Budget does not contain on reflect the flavour and dynamism which one would expect of a Minister of Shri Jaffer Sharief's nature, may be, because he may have been placed under predicament due to circumstances prevailing in the country, due to economic crunch and other difficulties beyond his control.

But I am more disillusioned, may I say, I am much disappointed about the attitude the railway has taken towards the needs of the people from my State, Kerala, more particularly the Malabar region. I do not know

[Sh. E. Ahamed]

why was the railway partisan towards the needs of that area? The railway should have taken into consideration the long association with the people of the Malabar region because of Railways century old line from Shoranur to Mangalore. But, I am sorry to say that there was not even a word to speak about that region in the Railway Minister's Budget speech let alone doubling of the line from Shoranur to Mangalore. Even the compartments in those areas are a century-old. Those compartments are living evidence to the fact that the railways have passed a century. If you want to see the history of the railways and we have century-old railways, it is better to see the compartments in our areas.

Why did you not have a Museum for Railways at least to keep those compartments as a replica of one century-old railways? Why should you put ramshackled compartments in our areas? Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to instruct the officers of the railways at least to consider the people of Malabar region as ordinary citizens of Indian who are paying the same fare as are being paid by the people elsewhere.

We are deprived of the new railway lines and also new other projects and trains was the project which the railways could take up for Kerala except the one from Kayamkulam to Alleppey or Trichur to Guruvayur? Why did not the railway taken up a proposed railway line from Kuttipuram to Guruvayur? If the line from Kuttippuram to Guruvayur will also be taken up, it will be very useful to the people of Malabar. This would help this neglected.

Another matter which I may just bring to the notice of the hon. Minister is concerning the Malabar especially Ernad area or which had taken part an important role in our freedom struggle. That is one area where three is no Railway and now there is one railway line. But even Nilambur-Shoranur line has now proved to be uneconomical. But I am sorry to say that the Railways have not taken any interest to make it economically viable. The people want to use that railway especially on Sundays. The Railways have taken a peculiar stand that on Sundays there would be only one train instead usual two trains, daily. If new two trains would be allotted on that line that would make this more viable and it would have been possible to have trains from Nilambur to Calicut *via* Shoranur or Neelambore to Alleppy *via* Shoranur.

Therefore, in short I would say that the Railways have perhaps neglected this area completely and the provision made for the improvement of that section, may I say, is woefully inadequate for Kerala Where a provision of Rs. 70 crores is necessary for taking up the doubling of the line from Trivandrum to Quilon, the Budget has provided only Rs. 5 crores and electrification, so far as Kerala is concened, has not been attended to at any rate.

Therefore, I would take this opportunity to request the hon. Minister to pay some more attention for the development of this area particularly Malabar area In this connection, may I make a proposal to the hon. Minister to take up a new line, a very short but very important one? That line, which I propose is from Nilambur to Feroke *via* Manjeri. This will serve two purposes. On the one hand it will make the Nilambur line more economically viable. On the other hand, the Railway will be doing a great service to the people who had made great sacrifices in the freedom movement, from the Ernad area.

Therefore, I strongly appeal to the hon. Minister to take appropriate steps for a new line. That line would also cover all the important industrial areas like Mavoor and Manjeri. Therefore, I take this opportunity to request the hon. Minister with whatever strength that I would be able to command, to take necessary steps to have this new line, namely Nilambur-Feroke *via* Manjeri.

Another important point which I just would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister and through him to his Department is about the untapped resources of the Railways. The Railways should also make use of the resources—whatever is possible—which is within the jurisdiction of the Railways.

In this connection, I may request the hon. Minister to make use of a triangular land at from Shoranur. This area round the corner connect the line from Mangalore to Trivandrum and from Mangalore to Madras. This is a very important land and I should say it is commercially important area which the Railways can make use of for the purpose of railway operations as well as for commercial purposes.

I may also invite the attention of the hon. Minister to the increase in freight rates that the Minister has proposed, which according to me, is unbearable for a State like Kerala. Kerala in a consumer State. We have to bring everything from other States. But what is the position? The increase proposed now is only ten per cent according to the hon. Minister. It is true that it is ten per cent now. But in 1989-90 there was an increase of elevent to eighteen per cent.

15.00 hrs.

In 1990-91. there was again an increase of ten per cent. Now, there is an additional dose of ten per cent. So. in the span of three years. one has to pay about 38 per cent increase in the freight rate. A small State like Kerala will not be able to bear this increase. We have to bring all the raw materials like cement. iron and steel, coal from far-off places. So, the small industries in our State will not be able to bear this extra cost, which is due to the increase in the freight rate. Therefore, the Government should also take into account the fact that it is 38 per cent and not 10 per cent that the people will be bearing.

I would just like to have one word about the employees, and especially the rilway employees of the lower strata has not been taken care of in the matter of improvement. For example, there is a provision for running allowance. Running allowance has been given to the drivers and the guards. What about the carriage boys and TTEs? They are excluded because the Railways are of the view that it is given only for those who are responsible for running of the train. The Railway Station Masters filed a writ petition in the Court and said that they are also responsible for running of the train. But then the Railways took a view and said that they are not responsible for running the train and only the engine drivers and the guards are responsible...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Since the debate started, I have been listening to everybody. I appreciate and agree with the views of the hon. Members about higher allocatios, regional development. passenger amenities. welfare of staff. etc. But what I expect from them is that they can help and educate me on freight and fare. whether they expect me to increase it or decrease it.

SHRI E. AHAMED: I appreciate the Minister's concern in this matter. But what I mean to say is this. The needs of the people in the lower strata of the Railways should also be taken care of.

I do not want to take much time of the House. I do not want to bring more points as the other Members are waiting to do it.

It is quite natural that the Minister who is incharge of Railways will have

[Sh. E. Ahamed]

problems which will be more complex in nature. Fortunately or unfortunately in our country there are three categories of Ministers. The first category Ministers are "Yes man Ministers". For example, the Ministers in charge of development. The Industry Minister cannot say 'no'. The Minister-in-charge of Commerce Cannot say 'no'. The second category Ministers are "No man Ministers". They cannot say 'yes'. For example, the Finance Minister will not be able to say 'yes' because he will have to bear an excess burden. The third category of Ministers are "*Parkalam* Ministers". The late Shri Kamaraj was the first in the category of "*Parkalam Ministers*". I just put the Minister of Railways in the category of "*Parkalam* Ministers".

With these words, I support the Railway Budget.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: (Chimur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Budget presented by the Minister of Railways this year keeping in view the present state of economy is a budget with a nominal surplus. He deserves to be thanked for his attempts to include in the budget some new projects and conversion of some metre gauge lines into broad gauge.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today there is a demand from all the parts of the country to construct railway lines and eradicate backwardness. From that point of view, construction of railway lines is a sentimental issue which is linked with the promotion of our economy. In the budget proposals, wherever the hon. Minister has proposed to construct new railway lines and convert some metre gauge lines into broad gauge lines, it may be all right for that particular area. but there must be some criteria in this regard. It has been observed till date that the political pressure has played a vital role in deciding to construct a new line or in conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge. However, the Vidarbha region, despite being backward and most needy, has always been a victim of apathy because the people did not voice their demands. Every year, we hope of some improvements in our region but in vain and this year also, the Budget has given us nothing. For years, we are living in this hope. We had high hopes from Jaffer Sharief Saheb because we have personal acquaintance wit hhim but he also did not pay attention to our demands this year.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from backward areas of Vidarbha namely Bandara, Chandrapur and Gadhiroli. This traditionally tribal area is backward in every respect. I would like to tell the hon. Minister that the Britishers ruled our country for one hundred and fifty years and they found our area to be backward but they realise its potantial. The area has coal reserves, thick forests and rice is produced here and bamboos are sent from here to all parts of the country. Perhaps keeping in view the backwardness and the rich forests in that areas, which have high potentialities, the Britishers constructed a railway line in that area during their regime and that railway line is hundred years old. But unfortunately, the Ministry of Railways could not be able to see any potentiality in that area and whenever we repeated our demand of converting this metre gauge line into broad gauge, the Ministry overlooked our demand. I have been elected as a Member of the Lok Sabha for the third term and I have been constantly requesting you for the last ten yeas to convert the Chandrapur, Gondia and Jabalpur-Chandrapur-Gondia 242 kilometre narrow gauge into broad gauge. Every time we are told that due to paucity of funds, the work will be under taken in the next Plan. We have reached the Eighth Plan period but no positive efforts have been made in this direction.

15.08 hrs. [SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would also like to submit that since it is a backward and tribal area, no industry is set up here. Gadchirauli in Maharashtra is a 'no industry district'. Despite various types of relaxations, concessions and subsidies extended by the Central Government as well as the State Government continuously for six to eight years, no big industrialist has shown any interest to set up an industry there till date. The only reason behind this attitude of industrialists, is the absence of railway line. The industrialists are not interested to go there despite many benefits. Consequently, there is wide spread resentment and dissatisfaction among the youths due to lack of industrialization in the region while it has high potential. This resentment has pushed them into the Naxalite grid. Three or four days back, I had tried to draw the attention of Lok Sabha towards the growing menace of Naxalite activities in my area. This problem is assuming alarming proportion due to absence of facilities, guidance and non-utilisation of resources properly. I take this opportunity to inform the hon. Minister that the issue of railway line is linked with our sentiments and hence he should make efforts to convert this narrow gauge line. I will invite the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards this aspect. When Shri Madhava Rao Scindia was the Minister of Railways, I had met him and made a demand in this regard. He had issued directions to his officers to formulate a proposal in this regard. While processing the proposal it was stated that there was not sufficient passenger traffic on that railway line. He gave me the figures of eight days' revenue collection on that line as to Rs. 336 only. But for those eight days I handed over the photographs of the trains running on that route to the hon. Minister. You will be surprised to know that the number of passengers sitting on the roof of the trains exceeded the number sitting inside the trains. Whereas the Ministry of Railways had furnished quite contradictory figures to the hon. Minister. Thereafter Railways have earned thousands of rupees in the course of their campaign against ticketless passengers. When they were informed about it they gave the assurance that the practice of travelling without ticket in vogue there would be curbed.

We are committed to the backward region, tribal region and the down-trodden. I would like to urge upon the Government that unless the conversion of railway line from Chandrapur to Gondia is undertaken, the people will continue to face great deal of hardship, because the people have to cover a long distance for boarding the train and they face a number of problems for sending their goods like rice, mats and coal. You are not acceeding the long standing demand of the people for extending the train which now runs between Chandrapur and Wadsa, upto Sondad. Secondly, there should be a broad gauge line from Nagpur to Umrer because coal is found at that place and coal is transported from there to thermal power station. There is a broad gauge line upto that place. If you extend that line from Umrer to Wadsa, which I think is only 80 kms. the industrialists will automatically run there to get the benefits of no-industry district i.e. Chandrapur and Gadchirauli.

In this budget you have ignored Vidarbha and Nagpur which are situated at the Centre of India. Trains from all over the country pass through Vidarbha region. This region has been neglected very much. Last time we were given an assurance that the direct trains from Nagpur to Bombay and Delhi would be started in the near future but we are very disappointed to see this budget in which you have not taken that into consideration at all. We could not

[Sh. Vilas Muttemwar]

find any reason as to why Nagpur and Vidarbha are often neglected despite a lot of assurances given to us time and again. Now I request you to assure us of not neglecting Nagpur and Vidarbha any more.

I would like to remind the Hon. Minister that Nagpur is an industrial area where a big Ordnance factory is situated. There are about 10 thousand employees in that factory and there is a long standing demand that a local train should be started from Nagpur central to Ambajhari Ordnance Factory. Nagpur is a big and developing city of Maharashtra and running of local train services have become necessary there. There is another demand for running a local train from Bhandara to Jawahar Nagar and Sarvatra Nagar where another ordnance factory is situated, in which about 8 to 10 thousands employees are working. I hope he will try to fulfil these demands. Further, I would like to request the hon. Minister to pay his attention towards the backward areas of Vidarbha region which is one of the fast developing region of the country. If the railway line between Chandrapur and Gondia is converted, it will reduce the distance by about 60 to 70 kms. as per the route through the National Highway. Due to this, traffic will increase on this route and the freight charges will also be reduced.

I, therefore, requesting you again to pay attention to all these points. There are certain other demands but I would not like to take more time. So I conclude my speech with the hope that this time you will not neglect Vidarbha and especially my area.

[English]

DR. VASANT NIWENTTI PAWAR (Nasik): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on Railway Budget and the Demands for Grants.

Railways is the life line of our country. It is largest in Asia and 2nd biggest in world. The reputation of the Indian Railways in the past was very good. But in the recent past it has been deteriorating very fast. The number of passengers travelling by Railways is to the tune of about two crores and recently it has increased by 5.17 per cent. I appreciate the Railway Minister for presenting this budget in this awkward condition but I hope that he will pay more attention to the consumer satisfaction and to the welfare of the travellers.

Usually we see that the condition of the wagons and the carriages is deteriorating very fast because they are getting very old. There is a shortage of 1.500 coaches and only 600 coaches are planned to be produced during 1990-91. I do not know how these 2.100 coaches are going to be acquired. Major steps should be taken in this direction.

I will request the Railway Minister that the new railway lines must be constructed in a planned way. He has already said that he is going to establish a task Force. The blue print on the planning and modernisation of the Railways in future is going on but still it has to acquire maximum speed.

Being a medical man, being a surgeon, I would like to say that whenever we are traevlling in the train, the first-aid box in the coach is not having any medicines. No type of first-aid if it becomes necessary, is available in the Railways.

So far as the safety measures are concerned, for every death, the Railway Ministry pays Rs. two lakhs, but the procedure is very clumsy. It takes lot of time for the person concerned to get that money. It should be made easy.

If the men and material make mistakes, the accidents occur. At the same time, accidents occur because of the old carriages and the old locomotives. The effect of the accidents is also on the minds of the people. People should have confidence in the Railways and feel that there would be no accidents. If the confidence of the people is lost, they will always hesitate to travel on the Railways.

So far as the punctuality is concerned, the train can come late but the passengers cannot. I would like to know why we should not have hundred per cent punctuality, which is at present more an exception than a rule. Unpunctuality leads to lot of losses, including loss of man-hour. If the wagons are not available or if they are delayed by more than twenty-four hours, then perishable items like grapes, onions and other fruits get damaged. It is a national wastage. So, I would request the Railway Minister to look into it and see that the farmers are not put to loss.

In the past, the trains were running at right time. On hearing the whistle of the train, the farmers used to know what time of the day it was. But now that is not the case. So, this also has to be taken care of.

Just now one of my friends has said about the corruption in the Railways. There is one agency. If you become a member of that agency, you can travel without ticket, and if you are caught without ticket, then whatever is the fine, it will be paid by that agency. This is a type of an insurance which is going on. So, this also is to be thought about. People are taking a chance because hundred per cent without ticket travellers are not being caught.

The Railway Minister has said about the privatisation of the stalls. It is very good that he has started working in the direction of privatisation. I think this is a good step and this will improve the efficiency of the Railways. So far as Maharashtra is concerned, Konkan Railways has made a provision. But that is a very meagre provision and that will take years for completion. The demand has been put up by the people of Konkan area and Maharashtra. We should not deprive the facility for a long time to them. Another problem in Maharashtra is nearby to the railways, slums are being erected. When there are slums nearby to railways there is a danger to the human life and it will also cause hindrance to the punctuality of the trains. The Government of Maharashtra has given a proposal that the slums must be kept at a distance of 30 feet away from the railway line. But the Railway Minister has refused that. The Railway Board has refused to give that land. They have demanded about 6.25 per cent rent per year on the market value. No alternative land can be given by the Maharashtra Government. The people living in the slum areas cannot afford this big 6.25 per cent rent per year. So the solution will be one per cent rent for the land to be given on long lease. Then only the people living in the slum areas near the tracks will get the land and trains will also run on time.

CIDCO of Maharashtra has given an offer of bearing two-thirds cost in construction of Sanpada station on Belapur-Mankhurd line. The proposal is still lying in the Railway Ministry. No approval has yet been given. May I request the Railway Minister to please look into it?

About my constituency, Nasik, I may mention that next month we are going to have a Kumbh Mela at Nasik where millions of people from all over the country are going to come to Nasik and Trambakeswar. For providing better transport facilities, special trains must be started. I request the Hon'ble Minister that Nasik Road railway station should be upgraded and made a terminus. I propose a new railway line from

[Dr. Vasant Niwentti Pawar]

Pune to Nasik Road to Surat. It will connect two States and three industrial towns in two different States. The Adivasi population will also get the benefit of it.

As far as Panchavati Express is concerned, it is already too much ocerloaded. I request the Hon'ble Minister to start a parallel Panchavati Express between Manmad and Bombay, leaving both stations at the same time. If not, I will request the Hon'ble Minister to attach a special first class bogie to the existing train. Whenever I travel in first class I find so many people standing in the coach, not getting a seat.

The quota of reservation at Nasik Road must also be increased because the traffic is increasing. The computer reservation facility should be made available at Nasik Road. About the Nasik Road Railway Institute of Electrical Engineering at Nasik, the anticipated cost of the proposal is Rs. 90.28 lakhs. But the provision in the Demands for Grants is only Rs. one lakh. That is not going to improve the position. For rehabilitation of the SLS and traction motor frames the cost is Rs. 2.62 crores but the provision is only Rs. 48.27 lakhs. That is not going to improve the situation. I will request the Hon'ble Minister to please look into the matter.

I am happy that railway overbridges are being constructed at Lasalgaon—the biggest market of the country—Niphad and at Odha in my constituency. With this the transport facilities will increase and it will help the farmers. There is a demand for a railway gate at village Kusumadi in Yeola taluka. There are so many deaths that took place at this site. I request the Hon'ble Minister to provide a railway gate at Kusumadi in Yeola taluk.

About the family members of the deceased railway employees, I request that railway stalls should be reserved for them so that they can also earn something and so that the privatisation policy will also prove to be good.

As a last point I would submit to the Railway Minister, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that there should be some research activity going on in the country so far as the railway is concerned, as well as there should be a scheme for railway education of the common man so that the common man will know that the Railways are the national properties and he should not try to destroy them any more.

Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

DR. JAYANTA RONGPI (Autonomous District): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would say that the Railway Budget is a very cleverly manipulated one. It has gone against the interest of the common man. Not only that. It has gone against even the Congress(I)'s poll manifesto and also it has gone against the President's Address. The Congress(I) declared that they will check the price rise within 100 days. But by this Railway Budget they themselves have increased the fares and freight of the goods transported through Railways and the increase in fares itself again has inflationary effect and it will further increase the prices of essential commodities.

Again, in the President's Address it was said that the Government will pay attention to Assam when it needs. But the longstanding demand of the people of Assam and North-East is to convert the existing metre gauge between Guwahati and Tinsukia into broad gauge. But this Budget has failed to give a complete commitment in this regard. Yes, we definitely understand the limitations and constraints, but seeing the magnitude of the problem, the socio-economic problem, and the demand being a longstanding one, at least it should have got priority.

Then, the Railway line between Guwahati and Dibrugarh is not only for the State of Assam, it is very much essential for the entire North-East region—Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya. So, I hope the hon. Minister will review and also give a commitment that the existing metre gauge will be converted into broad gauge between Guwahati and Dibrugarh.

Secondly, there is also a longstanding demand in Assam that they also have Divisional Headquarters at Rangiya and this is very much essential for the smooth administrative functioning and also to fulfil the aspirations of the local people there and in this regard also the Railway Budget is silent and I hope the hon. Minister will review this also and a Divisional Headquarters under N.F. Railway at Rangiya will be established soon.

Another point which I would like to bring to his attention is that I belong to a very backward area, i.e., the Hill Districts of Assam, and I represent both the Hill Districts of Assam and there the Headquarters is Diphu, and we have a railway station there. But some of the long-distance trains like the North-East Express, Tinsukia Mail and Assam Mail do not stop there. Only one of them stops there. But this is a District Headquarters of both the Hill Districts. So, I also request the hon. Minister to look into this problem and at least the long-distance trains, viz. North-East Express, Tinsukia Mail and Assam Mail, should have a stop at Diphu.

Then, so many hon. Members have drawn the attention of the hon. Minister about the corruption. Here, I would like to pinpoint only one aspect of the corruption. In our district, there is plenty of teak and other forest products and smuggling is going on for quite sometime. After our party came to power in the Autonomous District Council under which the management of forest comes, we took very strict measures and smuggling of timber and teakwood had stopped by road. But unfortunately we detected so many cases where the smuggled logs and timbers are booked by the Railways without proper documents of the Forest Department and the District Council. We have detected two or three cases and then we approached the divisional railway officials and the concerned station masters. At that time, they could not produce any papers and even they failed to identify the persons who had booked these valuable teak timbers. Then, we tried to prosecute these station masters concerned who have indulged in such corrupt practices. But from Malegaon district headquarters, they have been transferred to some other place and so we could not prosecute them.

Here, I would like to specifically point out to the hon. Minister that from my district of Karbi Anglong, timber is being booked without any proper document in Bokajan and Lumding railway stations. So, by our strict vigilance, smuggling by road is not possible now. But corruption is rampant in the Railways. I hope the hon. Minister will look into this matter.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Will you kindly write to me?

DR. JAYANTA RONGPI: I will definitely write to you.

Sir, I hope that the growing trend of privatisation would not affect the lower class employees who are employed in catering and other spheres of Railways. I hope the hon. Minister will take adequate steps so that the growing needs of the people of North East are fulfilled.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KALKA DAS (Karol Bagh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for allowing me to speak on the Railway Budget. The Rialway has an important role in the progress of the country and in the service of the society. But unfortunately, neither the public nor the travellers and the employees of this department are satisfied with it. At the same time it is not playing its role satisfactorily in the country's progress. Though, I know that Shri Jaffer Sharief is in no way responsible for the failure of this department as he has assumed charge of this office recently. The people are very much dissatisfied with the bad condition of this department. This has not done any commendable work in any sphere. This is correct that Shri Jaffer Sharief cannot be held responsible for this situation but he too has not given any indication in the Railway-budget that he has presented here, which may assure us that this important department of the country will render effective service to the public or will fulfil the expectations of the development of the country.

Unfortunately, there is a proposal of hiking the fare instead of providing relief to the public in the Railway-Budget presented by the hon. Minister. Insead of making available commodities to the consumers at cheap rates, freight has been increased, which will ultimately cause price-rise. It is obvious from this budget that the increase in freight rates will lead to price-rise which is not conducive to the welfare of the country and the society.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this budget will affect the prices of commodities which will cause hardship to the common man. In this budget the Hon. Minister has not proposed any step, which may assure the people of any relief in the future. From this budget neither the public nor the employees of this department are happy. It has not created any confidence in the society. The employees are much harassed due to injustice being done with them by the department itself.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the largest Railway colonies of Asia—Kishanganj, Sarai Rohilla and D.C.M. Colony fall in my constituency. The residents of those colonies had invited me and appraised me of their problems. They gave me a memorandum. Mismanagement of their department is mentioned in their memorandum which is here in my hand. On the basis of this memorandum I had written a letter to the hon. Railway Minister and I had made certain queries also from the Railway-department. Sir, through you I urge the Railway Minister to give jobs to the wards of the class-IV Rail way employees and to allow them to retain their quarters in which they are residing so that they may not have to face hardship. This assurance should be given to them by the Railway department.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Railway Minister had said that we will take steps which will ensure relief to the poor. I would like to cite some examples about his department. The class IV employees are given Railway-pass once in two years whereas the officers get that twice in a year. It is a very discriminatory approach that those who are powerful get passes twice in a year and the poor who are helpless and not in a position to purchase tickets are allowed that concession only once in two years. I think that this disparity should not be there and these poor employees should be given more passes. If it is not possible, then at least they should be treated at par.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Railway has not provided any hospital in its colonies i.e. Kishanganj and Sarai-Rohilla. There are no medical facilities for the lower staff residing in those colonies. They have been asking for a 20-bed hospital in their colonies for the last several years but no such hospital has been constructed there for them. This is certainly a very unfortunate situation. I request the hon. Railway Minister to construct a 20-bed hospital there as soon as possible. I request him to set up a Central

School also in that locality. The Railway employees are demanding that for a long time so that their children may get good education as the standard of the Railway Schools is not up to the mark. If a Central School is set up there the wards of the employees who come on transfer will be able to continue their studies. So, a Central School must be opened at once there.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Kishanganj is a very big colony but the Railway has not taken any step to provide a milk vend so that milk may be available easily to the people there. Sir, through you I demand from the hon. Railway Minister to set up a Mother-dairy booth so that the class four Railway employees may easily get milk at cheap rate and they may be able to bring up their children properly.

The Railway department has not provided any transport facility in such a big colony. There are no taxi/scooter or any other conveyance facilities available in that locality. They have to suffer when they fall ill or face any other trouble. A number of employees have to come daily to the Railway station to attend their duties but no direct bus service has been arranged despite their constant demand for that. I request the hon. Railway Minister to look into their problems.

I have raised in the House many demands of the railway employees. There are total 17 demands in their memorandum. Some of those I have raised here in the House and the rest I have sent to the Railway Minister through questions and letters.

I am hopeful that while Mr. Jaffer Sharief will take steps to provide relief to the railway employees he will also take immediate action to provide necessary amenities to the passengers. (*Interruptions*) Yes. he is right. As his name is Sharief (gentleman). he should show his gentlemanliness is conceding the demands of the railway employees. This is what we can expect from a gentleman of his stature. I agree with you and I have conveyed your sentiments to them.

Today itself I was surprised to see the mismanagement in the railways when I was returning from Lucknow by Gomati Express. People were moving freely in the reserved compartments even without any check. They caused a lot of inconvenience to the passengers who have actually booked seats. When I made a complaint to the conductor about all this he expressed his helplessness. When I asked him whether they possessed tickets with them, he gave a negative reply. I again enquired as to how they were travelling without tickets. To this he replied that it was a regular practice. No proper care is being paid even to reserved compartments. Every one has a complaint against the railways whether it is the employees, the public or the passengers. The railways have been playing a very important role in the progress of the country. But the present performance of the department is far below its normal standard. Its performance is contrary to the public expectations. I would like to request Shri Jaffer Sharief to give some relief in the fare-hike keeping in view the hardship of the people and ameliorate the difficulties of the railway employees so that the railways could be run smoothly. I have to say this much only. I am thankful to you. sir for providing me time and am hopeful that the hon. Minister of Railways will show his gentlemanliness and take steps to provide relief to the public as well to the railway employees.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, please have a look at the Janata Dal also. You have not called a single Member of this party.

MR. CHAIRMAN: After a lady member. Shrimati Kshirsagar.

***SMT. KESHARBAI SONAJI KSHIRSAGAR** (Beed): Mr. Chairman, Sir, lady member should be allowed to speak. I rarely participate in the debate. I may please be allowed to speak.

After the assassination of the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the country is passing through a crisis. He was a great and popular leader who possessed rare qualities of leadership. He led the country very efficiently and had a modern outlook. I congratulate the Hon. Railway Minister for formulating the Railway Budget keeping the modern outlook in mind.

The Railway Budget has offered several concessions to weaker sections of the society as promised in the manifesto of the Congress Party. No additional levies have been imposed on essential items. This is really a welcome feature of this Budget. By increasing the fares and freight charges the Railways are going to get a net revenue of 584 crores of rupees. I want to make a request the Hon. Minister that 50% concession in fares which was offered to handicapped persons in the last budget should be reintroduced to help the weaker section of our society. I also request that this concession should also be extended to widows of our jawans.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the major demand of my area namely Parali—Beed railway line. This demand is being made for the past twenty years by the people of this area. Beed is the most backward district of Maharashtra. The former Prime Minister and Railway Minister were kind enough to order a survey of this railway line. But I am sorry to point out that no provision has been made in this Budget for this railway line. About four lakhs people from this district go to other places in search of livelihood. I want to know when the Govt. is going to pay attention to the development of this area? It is the policy of the Govt. to ensure development of backward areas. I met the Hon. Minister and he has agreed that he will consider the demand within four months. I request him to kindly make necessary provision for Beed Parali railway line in this Budget.

The Govt. has taken the step of setting up Konkan Railway Corporation. I request that Marathwada Railway Corporation should also be set up on the same pattern. For Konkan railway and Manmad-Aurangabad railway line an amount of Rs. 14 and 10 crores was provided in the last budget. But in the present budget the allocation has been reduced by Rs. 10 crores and 5 crores respectively. If the allocation is reduced in this manner, let me point out, the completion of these railway lines will be next to impossible. Therefore, I suggest that at least Rs. 20 crores each should be allocated for these two railway lines.

I appreciate that only selected projects have been taken up for implementation. But I would like to suggest that by issuing bonds resources can be raised for completion of the railway lines. I would also like to propose that under Employment Guarantee Scheme, earth work can be taken up. It will generate employment and help in speedy completion of the railway line.

Now I would like to speak about Miraj—Latur and Marathwada railway line. When our beloved Prime Minister, late Smt. Indira Gandhi visited Marathwada 11 years back, she had announced these railway lines. But I am sorry to find that no budgetary provision has been made for Miraj—Latur railway line. I request that adequate provision should be made in this Budget for this railway line as well.

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*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

Catering service of the Railways is really in a bad shape. I am sorry to say that no attention has been paid to this service. The food items like *chapati* and *Daal* which are served are many times half-cooked. It is necessary that catering service is improved immediately. I suggest that as a part of "Indira Mahila Vikas Yojana", women officers should be appointed to oversee catering services of the Railways. Women by their nature are well-equipped to take up this job. As they can cook tasty food, I feel that if women are given the charge of catering service they would manage it efficiently and tasty and good food would be available to the railway passengers.

I would like to point out that many trains do not run on time. I feel that railways should ensure punctuality in the arrival and departure of the trains.

I also want to make a suggestion that the Railways should observe "Courtesy Week". Passengers who travel by second class do not receive good treatment from the railway employees. If "Courtesy Week" is observed, I am sure the Railway employees will get close to the travelling public. I request the Hon. Minister to consider this suggestion.

In the end I would like to impress upon the Minister that Beed being a backward district needs to be paid immediate attention. I request that atleast after four months necessary provision for Beed—Parali railway line should be made and the work should be started.

Hon. Minister hails from Karnataka. I also hail from Karnataka. My parents live in Karnataka. I do not demand anything from him. But I request that Hon. Minister should treat me as a sister and do something for the people of my area in Marathwada. I hope that Hon. Minister will favourably consider my humble request.

With these words I support the Railway Budget and thank you for giving me time to speak on it.

SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN (Sasaram): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the Budget that has been presented by the hon. Minister of Railways because there is no provision for development of Bihar in it. I would like to request him to pay special attention to the Grand Chord Line particularly to Central Bihar, keeping in view its great tourism potentiality. No new train has been introduced on the Grand-Chord Line during the last 43-44 years after independence. For example, 81 pairs of trains run between Patna to Delhi and Amritsar in a week but only the same number of trains which had been introduced by the Britishers prior to independence run on Grand-Chord Line. No new train has been introduced. Only 17 pairs of trains run on this line in a week. Earlier, in January 1991, the Government had decided that a Deluxe Express would regularly be run on this line. But it proved to be an empty assurance. I would like to request the hon. Minister to introduce a regular deluxe service on this line.

Bodh-Gaya is a tourist place. Tourists visit this place to see the Buddhist temple. But the Rajdhani Express does not stop at Gaya station. I would like that the Rajdhani Express must be provided a stoppage at Gaya station keeping the passengers requirements in view. The Madras Express which runs between Bokaro and Madras, should be extended upto Gaya, because a large number of tourists from Madras visit the tourist sites beyond Gaya and people from Central Bihar often go to Madras for treatment. There is no problem in giving extension to this train upto Gaya because it arrives at Bokaro at 8 O'clock in the morning and from there it resumes its return journey for Madras at 7 O'clock in the evening. So it can be easily extended upto Gaya and in this way the people of the Central

[Sh. Chhedi Paswan]

Bihar could be benefited. Besides, I would like to attract the attention of the hon. Minister to my constituency also. The light railway between Sasaram and Arrah which was running for last 10 years, has been cancelled. While new rail-services are being introduced in the country after independence, in Bihar, even old trains are being condemned and cancelled. In this connection I would like to make an earnest request to convert the Aarrah-Sasaram narrow gauge line into a broad-gauge one so that the people of that area could be benefited. The proposal for the construction of a rail-bridge near Patna on Ganga which was forwarded by the Government of Bihar is lying pending before the Central Government. This bridge will provide a direct link between South Bihar and North Bihar and also smoothen traffic movement between the two areas enabling the people raise their income. I would, therefore, like to request the hon. Minister to arrange early construction of the rail-bridge on Ganga near Patna.

In addition, I would like to submit that in 1984, the Government of Bihar submitted a proposal for the construction of the Pahleja-Pipradih-Chandunathpur-Bhavnathpur railway line to the Central Government. The Central Government had assured in 1988 that a new train service would be introduced on this line. It was also assured that work on this line would be speeded up in 1988 itself. But so far neither any new train service for Pahleja, Pipradih, Chandunathpur and Bhavnathpur has been introduced nor any work has been carried out on this line. I would, therefore, like to request the hon. Minister to complete this work immediately.

Besides, in order to lessen the burden of heavy traffic on the Grand-Chord Line a third railway line should be laid from Mughalsarai to Son Nagar. Also, keeping the importance of Rohtas district in view, Sasaram railway station must be beautified, because this is a historical place. There is the fort of Shershah who had ruled over India for five years. Tourists from abroad come there to see the fort. But no special train facility is available for this place. I would like the hon. Minister to arrange beautification of Sasaram railway station immediately.

With these words, I conclude. I am thankful to you for providing me time to speak.

SHRI MOHAN VISHNU RAWLE (Bombay-South Central): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to arrange installation of electrically operated destination boards in all the coaches of local trains running between Bombay V.T. and Karjat-Kasara and Churchgate and Virar. There is a need to extend the services of the local trains running from Bombay V.T. upto Karjat-Kasara and the other one running from Churchgate upto Virar. The speed of the trains in the Konkan region also needs to be increased. There is also a need to provide public address systems in all the stations to announce the names of the stations for all the local trains running between Bombay V.T., Karjat and Churchgate and Virar. It will be highly beneficial to the passengers.

The Government has sanctioned a grant-in-aid of Rs. 51 crore for the trains running in Konkan region. The amount of this grant-in-aid needs to be increased. There are Government directions that the local people will be given preference in the matter of recruitment in the Railway Corporation but it has been observed that people from outside Maharashtra are being recruited in it. I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to implement the Government's directives in this regard. Besides, the vacancies are being advertised in Hindi and English newspapers only. I would like to request that advertisement for these vacancies may also please be made in Marathi newspapers so that the local people may come to know about that. Likewise, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to allot the stalls to the local people only.

Now I would like to seek a clarification from the hon. Minister whether money allotted for Konkan Railway could be invested in the share market by the Corporation. So far as I know, an amount of Rs. ten crore has been deposited in the State Bank of Mysore. I would like to know whether this has been done with the prior permission of the Government. He should confirm it.

The Department of Railways had acquired land from the farmers for the Diwa-Vasai, Aapra-Roha, Karjat-Lonavan and Igatpuri-Kasara (third line) railway projects. Please let us know as to how much compensation has been paid to the farmers in lieu of their land. Will they be given any preference in recruitment? All this must be checked up properly. The Department of Railways should sanction maximum funds for the Kurla/Bandra terminal. Grant-in-aid for the Thane-Kurla-Vikroli-Trombay-Vadala line should also be given. I oppose the railway-fare-hike. The Government which made a promise to reduce prices within 100 days has named the items, the prices of which are to be reduced but it has not named the items the prices of which are to be hiked. The Government which made a promise to reduce the prices in 100 days has presented a Budget of rising prices within a period of 100 days of its resuming office. (*Interruptions*)

16.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I express my thanks to you for providing me time to speak. It was my maiden speech in the House.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House now stands adjourned to meet again at 5 p.m. for Budget.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Seventeen of the Clock

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Seventeen of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

WELCOME TO RT. HONOURABLE SIR ANEROOD JUGNAUTH, THE PRIME MINISTER OF MAURITIUS AND LADY SAROJINI JUGNAUTH

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to make an announcement.

As the hon. Members are aware, the Rt. Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius and Lady Sarojini Jugnauth are currently on an official visit to India.

I am glad to inform the House that Rt. Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius is now seated in the special box to watch the proceedings of this hon. House.

On my own behalf and on behalf of the hon. Members of the House, we extend a very warm welcome to Rt. Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth. We wish them a happy and fruitful sojourn in our country. We also wish to convey our greetings to the Parliament and the friendly people of Mauritius.